

REMARKS

In a non-final Office Action mailed on July 13, 2007, the United States Patent and Trademark Office rejected all pending claims (Claims 1-20) of the present application. Applicants are cancelling Claims 5-7, 12, and 17-20. Applicants are also amending Claims 1, 8-11, and 13-16. Finally, Applicants are adding new independent Claim 21. Applicants believe the now-pending claims (1-4, 8-11, 13-16, and 21) are in condition for allowance for the following reasons.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Office Action states that “it is not clear exactly what the first base point is – is this a point anywhere along the base aperture?” Independent Claims 1, 5, 17, and 20 each recite “a prism comprising a base aperture and three intersecting lateral faces which meet at an apex, each of the lateral faces having a base edge which forms a portion of the perimeter of the base aperture and said base edge of each lateral face intersects the base edge of a contiguous lateral face to form a base point...” A prism is a geometric shape with a volume, which is properly defined by its boundaries. Here, the boundaries of the prism are the aperture and the three intersecting lateral faces. For visualization purposes only, the three lateral faces would be the sloped walls of a triangular pyramid with the aperture as its base. Although not expressly claimed, each of the lateral faces would have to intersect with each of the other two lateral faces to define the prism.

From this recited claim language, it is clear that “a base point” is a discrete point located at the intersection of two lateral faces and the base aperture. Since each prism comprises “three intersecting lateral faces,” there are a total of three base points at the perimeter of each base aperture.

The Office Action also states that “[c]larification is required as to exactly what the first base point is and what the continuous edge containing this point and the apex are.” The claim language “each prism comprising a base aperture and three intersecting lateral faces which meet at an apex,” for visualization purposes, defines a physical structure like a triangular pyramid,

wherein the base aperture is the base of the pyramid and each of the three lateral faces is a sloped wall of the pyramid. The intersection of two lateral faces (walls) forms an edge, which is bounded by a base point at the aperture and by the apex, the apex being the point where all three lateral faces intersect.

The claim language “wherein a first face of at least one prism in the array includes a first face first planar surface and a first face second planar surface, the first face planar surface and the first face second planar surface being contiguous along an edge, the edge substantially parallel to the base edge of the first face,” for visualization purposes, defines a more complicated triangular pyramid in which at least one wall of the pyramid has a change in slope. Figs. 8-9 illustrate a prism (pyramid) in which the slope of lateral faces (walls) get steeper. Figs. 10-11 illustrate a prism (pyramid) in which the slope of lateral faces (walls) get flatter. The contiguous edge between the first face first planar surface and first face second planar surface intersects edges between two lateral faces at end points. As a result, the edge between a base point and the apex includes a segment between the base point and an end point and a segment between the end point and the apex. Since the two segments share a common point (the end point), the two segments form a contiguous edge. Also, since any three points define a plane, the base point, end point, and apex are inherently coplanar.

The Office Action finally states that Claims “5-20 are indefinite for failing to explicitly set forth any steps as to the method in question. I.e., while ‘forming’ may be interpreted as a step, it is not clear from the claims exactly how this is being done and hence the claims are indefinite. Applicant should insert actual process language as to how the retroreflective sheeting, prism, and casting mold are actually formed, rather than relying on the shape of these structures for patentability.” Applicant is cancelling Claims 5-7, 12, and 17. Claims 8-11 and 13-16 are being amended to depend on Claim 1. New independent Claim 21 is being added to claim the method of forming the master mold. With these amendments and the foregoing explanations, Applicants believe they have overcome this § 112 rejection of Claims 5-20.

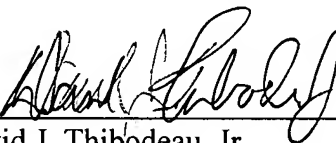
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe they have overcome the § 112 rejections of Claims 1-20 and that Claims 1-4, 8-11, 13-16, and 21 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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